

## 2. POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

**Measure Definition:** *“Now thinking about your physical health, which includes physical illness and injury, for how many days during the past 30 days was your physical health not good?” [Seven or more days of poor physical health]*

### **Why is recent poor physical health important to public health?**

For this report, we analyzed the percentage of adults who reported seven or more days of poor physical health in the past 30 days. This indicator is one approach to measuring the overall health of a population. It is a global measure of recent physical symptoms that can be used to compare across populations. A person's self perception about his or her physical health is important in that it can serve as a proxy measure for the burden of both acute and chronic health conditions. And, because people generally seek health care only when they feel unhealthy, self-perceptions are also predictive of the burden on the health care delivery system.

Previous Utah Department of Health (UDOH) reports had used one or more days in the past 30 days as a measure of poor physical health. We became concerned that using “one or more days” identified many people with minor and transient illnesses or injuries that had little effect on their overall well being or on the health care system. In 2004, therefore, a number of UDOH staff met to decide on a number of days of poor physical health in the past 30 that could be used to identify a population experiencing substantial physical health problems. We wanted the measure to permit us to compare the burden of poor physical health across different populations and assess how chronic diseases and chronic disease risk factors related to overall physical health status. After looking at many of these factors, the group chose seven or more days of poor physical health in the past 30 days as the indicator of recent poor physical health. This measure was found to have good positive association with fair or poor health and a number of chronic health conditions and health risk factors. It also had an intuitive appeal, in that a week or more of poor physical health in the past month seemed to present a significant burden on an individual.

### **Risk factors for poor physical health**

According to the analysis of the combined Utah BRFSS data from 2001–2005, this measure of poor physical health differed among socioeconomic and demographic subgroups in Utah. A higher percentage of women reported seven or more days of poor physical health compared with men. Older adults were more likely to report seven or more days of poor physical health than younger adults. A higher percentage of widowed, separated, or divorced persons reported seven or more days of poor physical health compared with married persons. The percentage of adults with less than a high school education who reported seven or more days of poor physical health was higher than that of adults with more education. The percentage of low-income adults who reported seven or more days of poor physical health was significantly higher than adults with higher annual household incomes. The percentage was higher for persons who were retired, unemployed, and unable to work than for adults who were employed. Compared with persons without any chronic medical conditions, persons with such conditions more often reported seven or more days of poor health.

It must be noted that since the BRFSS is a cross-sectional survey, the characteristics studied were assessed at a single point in time. Thus, in some cases, it is not possible to determine whether the characteristic preceded or followed an individual's response to this question.

**Utah Objective:** No objective listed.

**HP2010 Goal:** Overarching – Improve the quality and years of healthy life and eliminate health disparities.

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### Poor physical health in Utah

Using the combined 2001–2005 data, the age-adjusted percentage of Utah adults reporting seven or more days of poor physical health was 14.6%. The age-adjusted percentage for the entire U.S. adult population was 15.1%. The corresponding crude rate in Utah was slightly lower at 13.8%, most likely due to the fact that Utah has a younger population than the U.S. and that poor physical health is less likely in younger adulthood. Using the overall crude percentage, this means that in 2003 approximately 229,000 Utah adults had seven or more days of poor physical health.

This percentage varied among Utah's local health districts, from a low of 12.3%, age-adjusted, in Davis County and Summit County to a high of 18.9% in Southeastern Utah. Central Utah and Southeastern Utah rates were higher than the overall state rate.

Overall, the small area percentages for this measure of physical health ranged from a low of 7.9%, age-adjusted, in Woods Cross/North SL to a high of 25.0% in Magna.

In Davis County health district, the rate in Woods Cross/North SL was lower than the state rate. In the Salt Lake Valley health district, Magna and West Jordan North had rates higher than the state rate. In Southeastern Utah health district, this measure in Carbon/Emery Co. was higher than the state rate.

Figure 2.A: 7+ Days of Poor Physical Health by Health Status, Utah Adults, 2001-2005

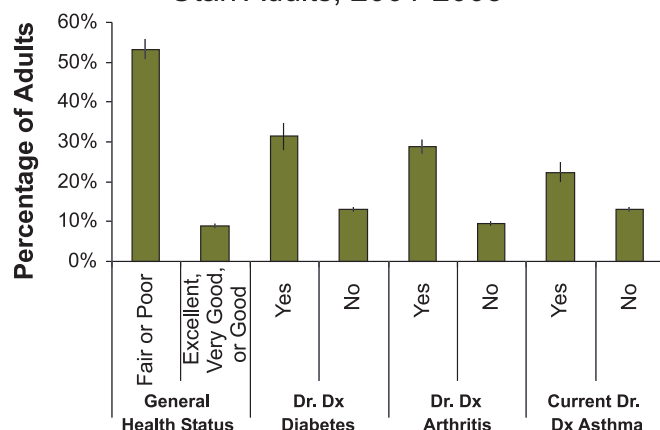
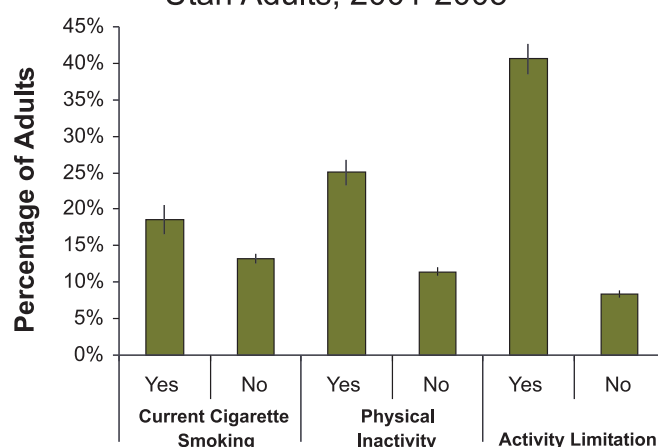


Figure 2.B: 7+ Days of Poor Physical Health by Risk Factor, Utah Adults, 2001-2005

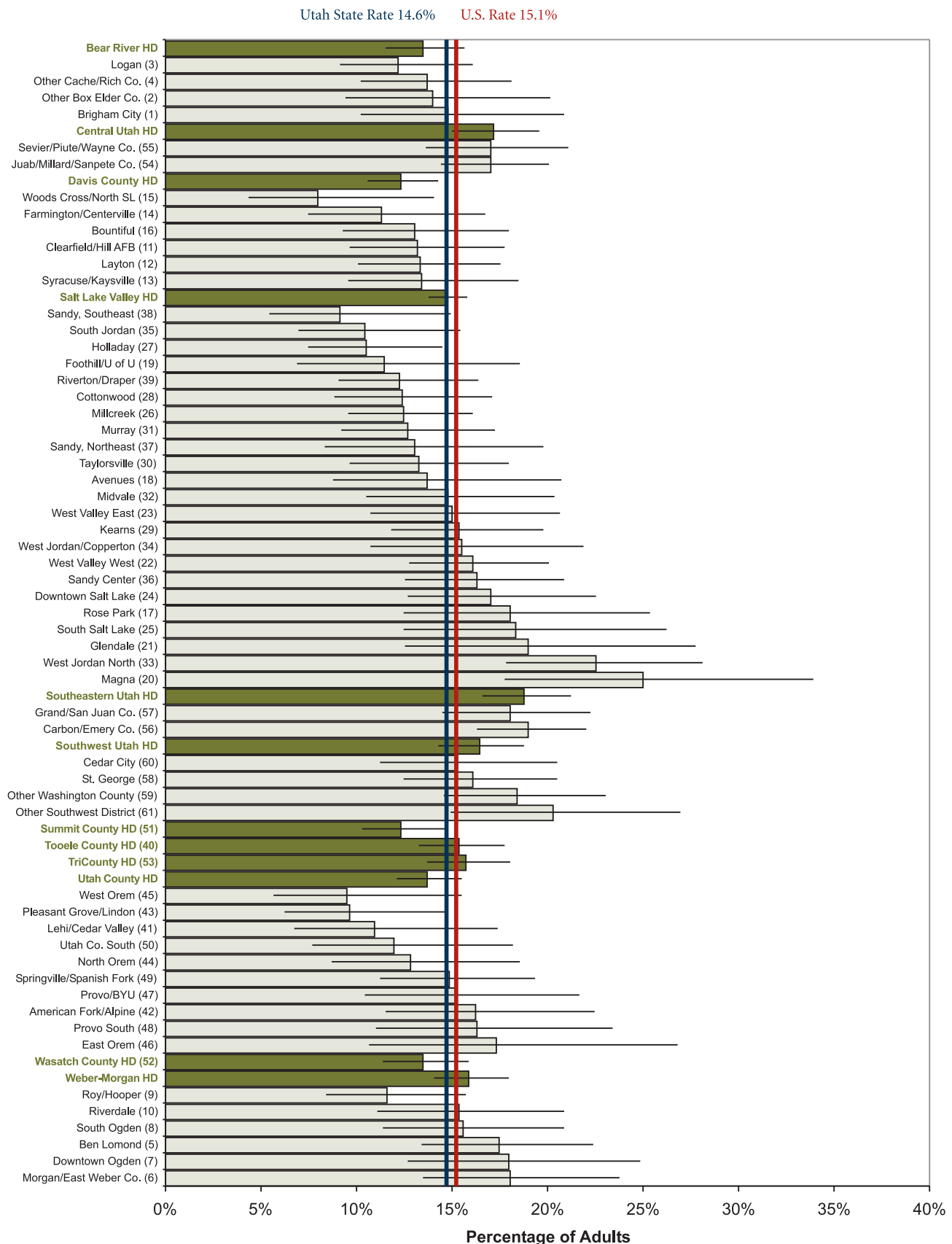


### Prevention/Resources

The Utah Department of Health works collaboratively with Utah's local health districts and other public and private organizations through many programs in order to prevent avoidable illness, injury, disability, and premature death; assure access to affordable, quality health care; and to promote healthy lifestyles. There is a wealth of information about Utah resources on the UDOH website [www.health.utah.gov](http://www.health.utah.gov).

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Figure 2.1: Percentage of Adults Who Reported Seven or More Days of Poor Physical Health by Local Health District, Small Area, Utah, and U.S., Adults Aged 18+, 2001–2005 (Age-adjusted)



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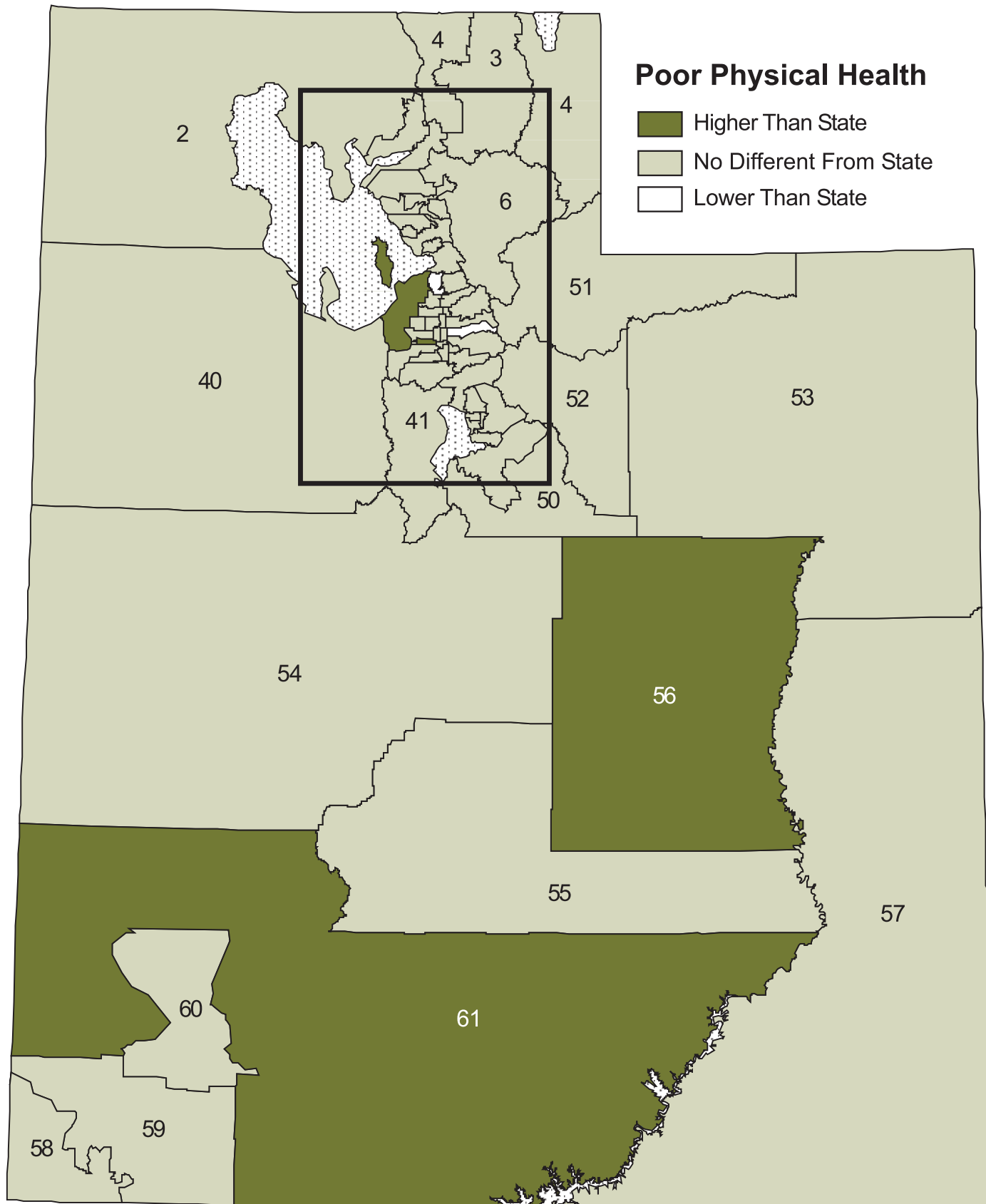
Table 2: 7+ Days Poor Physical Health by Health District, Small Area, Utah, and U.S., 2001-2005

State Rank*	State, Health District, or Small Area	2003 Population 18+	Number of Adults Reporting 7+ Days Poor Physical Health	Crude Rate	Age-adjusted Rate	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
	U.S.	217,803,051	32,779,359	15.1%	15.1%	15.0%	15.2%
	State of Utah	1,657,454	229,060	13.8%	14.6%	14.1%	15.2%
	<b>Bear River HD</b>	98,027	12,851	13.1%	13.4%	11.5%	15.7%
30	Brigham City (1)	14,566	2,125	14.6%	14.8%	10.2%	20.9%
12	Logan (3)	45,904	5,637	12.3%	12.2%	9.1%	16.1%
28	Other Box Elder Co. (2)	14,636	2,090	14.3%	14.0%	9.4%	20.1%
27	Other Cache/Rich Co. (4)	22,921	2,966	12.9%	13.7%	10.2%	18.1%
	<b>Central Utah HD</b>	47,558	7,904	16.6%	17.1%	15.0%	19.5%
47	Juab/Millard/Sanpete Co. (54)	31,637	5,154	16.3%	17.0%	14.4%	20.1%
46	Sevier/Piute/Wayne Co. (55)	15,921	2,738	17.2%	17.0%	13.6%	21.1%
	<b>Davis County HD</b>	175,027	19,165	11.0%	12.3%	10.6%	14.3%
20	Bountiful (16)	33,318	4,268	12.8%	13.0%	9.3%	18.0%
21	Clearfield/Hill AFB (11)	37,329	3,584	9.6%	13.2%	9.7%	17.8%
8	Farmington/Centerville (14)	19,034	1,905	10.0%	11.3%	7.5%	16.7%
23	Layton (12)	46,815	5,669	12.1%	13.4%	10.1%	17.6%
24	Syracuse/Kaysville (13)	24,542	2,570	10.5%	13.4%	9.6%	18.5%
1	Woods Cross/North SL (15)	13,989	1,192	8.5%	7.9%	4.4%	14.0%
	<b>Salt Lake Valley HD</b>	658,810	92,168	14.0%	14.7%	13.8%	15.8%
26	Avenues (18)	18,959	2,406	12.7%	13.7%	8.8%	20.7%
15	Cottonwood (28)	33,297	4,076	12.2%	12.4%	8.9%	17.1%
48	Downtown Salt Lake (24)	42,808	6,973	16.3%	17.0%	12.7%	22.6%
9	Foothill/U of U (19)	17,778	2,229	12.5%	11.5%	6.9%	18.5%
58	Glendale (21)	18,642	3,292	17.7%	19.0%	12.6%	27.7%
6	Holladay (27)	35,956	4,293	11.9%	10.5%	7.5%	14.5%
37	Kearns (29)	42,995	6,402	14.9%	15.4%	11.8%	19.8%
61	Magna (20)	15,623	3,398	21.8%	25.0%	17.7%	33.9%
29	Midvale (32)	21,672	3,320	15.3%	14.8%	10.5%	20.4%
16	Millcreek (26)	44,008	6,016	13.7%	12.5%	9.6%	16.1%
17	Murray (31)	24,072	3,214	13.4%	12.7%	9.2%	17.2%
13	Riverton/Draper (39)	41,391	4,541	11.0%	12.3%	9.1%	16.4%
54	Rose Park (17)	22,639	3,907	17.3%	18.0%	12.5%	25.3%
44	Sandy Center (36)	36,106	5,528	15.3%	16.3%	12.6%	20.9%
19	Sandy, Northeast (37)	18,245	2,199	12.1%	13.0%	8.3%	19.8%
2	Sandy, Southeast (38)	20,781	1,532	7.4%	9.1%	5.4%	14.9%
5	South Jordan (35)	20,931	2,332	11.1%	10.5%	7.0%	15.5%
55	South Salt Lake (25)	18,456	3,150	17.1%	18.3%	12.4%	26.2%
22	Taylorsville (30)	27,372	3,334	12.2%	13.2%	9.6%	18.0%
60	West Jordan North (33)	30,391	5,255	17.3%	22.5%	17.8%	28.2%
38	West Jordan/Copperton (34)	26,360	3,959	15.0%	15.5%	10.8%	21.9%
32	West Valley East (23)	35,527	4,889	13.8%	15.0%	10.7%	20.7%
41	West Valley West (22)	44,794	6,365	14.2%	16.1%	12.8%	20.1%
	<b>Southeastern Utah HD</b>	36,828	6,758	18.4%	18.9%	16.7%	21.3%
57	Carbon/Emery Co. (56)	21,451	4,037	18.8%	19.0%	16.3%	22.0%
53	Grand/San Juan Co. (57)	15,377	2,686	17.5%	18.0%	14.5%	22.3%
	<b>Southwest Utah HD</b>	116,150	19,467	16.8%	16.4%	14.3%	18.7%
34	Cedar City (60)	22,401	3,004	13.4%	15.3%	11.3%	20.5%
59	Other Southwest District (61)	15,384	2,988	19.4%	20.3%	14.9%	26.9%
56	Other Washington County (59)	32,503	6,000	18.5%	18.4%	14.6%	23.0%
42	St. George (58)	45,862	7,517	16.4%	16.1%	12.5%	20.5%
14	<b>Summit County HD (51)</b>	24,525	2,776	11.3%	12.3%	10.3%	14.7%
36	<b>Tooele County HD (40)</b>	32,458	4,648	14.3%	15.4%	13.3%	17.7%
40	<b>TriCounty HD (53)</b>	28,023	4,338	15.5%	15.7%	13.7%	18.0%
	<b>Utah County HD</b>	278,832	34,268	12.3%	13.8%	12.2%	15.6%
43	American Fork/Alpine (42)	26,819	4,291	16.0%	16.2%	11.5%	22.4%
49	East Orem (46)	14,955	2,336	15.6%	17.3%	10.7%	26.8%
7	Lehi/Cedar Valley (41)	18,752	1,890	10.1%	11.0%	6.7%	17.4%
18	North Orem (44)	25,965	3,053	11.8%	12.8%	8.7%	18.6%
4	Pleasant Grove/Lindon (43)	24,636	2,042	8.3%	9.7%	6.2%	14.7%
33	Provo/BYU (47)	39,401	5,902	15.0%	15.2%	10.4%	21.7%
45	Provo South (48)	48,138	4,053	8.4%	16.3%	11.0%	23.4%
31	Springville/Spanish Fork (49)	41,036	5,585	13.6%	14.9%	11.3%	19.4%
11	Utah Co. South (50)	17,363	1,839	10.6%	12.0%	7.7%	18.2%
3	West Orem (45)	21,774	2,868	13.2%	9.5%	5.6%	15.5%
25	<b>Wasatch County HD (52)</b>	12,514	1,651	13.2%	13.5%	11.4%	15.9%
	<b>Weber-Morgan HD</b>	148,702	22,900	15.4%	15.9%	14.0%	17.9%
50	Ben Lomond (5)	33,215	5,142	15.5%	17.4%	13.4%	22.4%
51	Downtown Ogden (7)	21,684	3,675	17.0%	18.0%	12.7%	24.8%
52	Morgan/East Weber Co. (6)	24,131	4,158	17.2%	18.0%	13.4%	23.8%
35	Riverdale (10)	15,522	2,636	17.0%	15.4%	11.1%	20.9%
10	Roy/Hooper (9)	27,898	3,122	11.2%	11.6%	8.4%	15.7%
39	South Ogden (8)	26,255	4,125	15.7%	15.5%	11.4%	20.8%

\*State rank is by 61 small areas for age-adjusted rate; 1 is always the lowest rate in the state and 61 is always the highest rate in the state.

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Figure 2.2: 7+ Days of Poor Physical Health by Small Area, Utah Adults Aged 18+, 2001–2005 (Age-adjusted)



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Figure 2.3: 7+ Days of Poor Physical Health by Small Area, Wasatch Front Adults 18+, 2001–2005 (Age-adjusted)

